

this authority. If I do, I shall make a decision; if I do not, I shall make no decision.

Senator Perrault: Honourable senators, I would add an additional comment. I have been contacted by Senator Edward Lawson, the independent from British Columbia, who has expressly stated that he does not want to change his seat in the Senate and that he fully intends to support the constitutional proposals of the government. He will make a statement when he is next in the chamber.

Senator Flynn: When will that be?

Hon. Jack Marshall: There will be a change in government by that time.

Senator Perrault: I have conveyed this information because, apparently, there are some senators who do not want to change their seating arrangements. Indeed, Senator Inman, as well, has informed the government that she wishes to remain in her present location in the chamber. Whether the honourable and distinguished senator has changed her mind on that point, I do not know.

Because of these events, I rather question the role that Senator Deschatelets appears to have assumed—that he is the spokesman for every member in the group of senators named by him the other day. Certainly, the whips do not appear to have received the same requests as those which, apparently, have been communicated to Senator Deschatelets.

Hon. Hartland de M. Molson: Honourable senators, I wonder whether the Leader of the Government has any right to make that statement. All of those names were given to Senator Deschatelets. Senator Bonnell, who was away, says now that he did not subscribe to the declaration, and we take his word for it. However, the Leader of the Government has absolutely no right to say that Senator Deschatelets is speaking off the top of this head. Senator Deschatelets is a sincere, honourable senator who has a longer history in Parliament than that of Senator Perrault. He has been a Speaker of this house, a former minister, and a member of the leader's party for 27 years. I do not think that the leader has any right at all to ascribe to him any motive that is not the most honourable.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

● (2015)

Senator Perrault: The point, Senator Molson, is that some senators have indicated to the government whip that they do not want their physical locations in this chamber changed. That is the only point to which I am addressing myself.

Senator Molson: It is not. You are addressing yourself to Senator Deschatelets.

Senator Perrault: Senator Molson, I have the floor at the present time.

Senator Asselin: You are nervous. Why are you so nervous?

Senator Perrault: May I suggest, then, that in order to clarify the situation the honourable senators in that group may wish to make their seating preferences known to their respective whips personally?

Senator Molson: May I just say that you are dragging your feet? It has been very apparent, and it is all around Ottawa, "Just watch it. They are just going to drag and drag their feet so that this gets downplayed." But that is not my point here.

Hon. H. A. Olson (Minister of State for Economic Development): Who is ascribing motives now?

Senator Molson: My point is that you have no right, Senator Perrault, to ascribe motives that are less than honourable to Senator Deschatelets.

Some Hon. Senators: Hear, hear.

Hon. Donald Cameron: Honourable senators—

Senator Flynn: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order—

The Hon. the Speaker: Senator Cameron.

Senator Cameron: Honourable senators, I have heard rumours to the effect that I am moving my seat. I want to say quite emphatically that I am quite happy where I am, and I am going to stay here.

Senator Perrault: That makes three.

Senator Flynn: I agree that this is the way to do it. If they do not want to move, they should rise right away. I suggest to Senator Inman that, if it is her wish to stay where she is, she should rise right away. It is a question of privilege.

With respect to Senator Lawson, if he is not able to be here, it will be too late to raise a question of privilege when he comes, if he ever comes.

Hon. Daniel Riley: That is a most unfair statement.

Senator Flynn: No, it is not.

Senator Riley: Yes, it is.

Senator Flynn: No, it is not. Can you deny that Senator Lawson is very seldom here?

Hon. F. Elsie Inman: Honourable senators, I said I would prefer to stay in my own seat until the fall. I have to change then to go down lower because I am finding it difficult to walk up this far and back. I mentioned to the Whip quite a long time ago that I was going to have to change in the fall because I was finding it difficult to walk down this far.

Senator Flynn: That is not clear. I don't think Senator Inman has made her point clear.

Senator Marshall: Mr. Speaker, I should like to raise a point of order, for clarification. When Senator Deschatelets made his statement this evening, I understood him to request a change in location for 16 members of the Senate. Could he clarify that, please?

Senator Deschatelets: Certainly there was no mistake there. I surely mentioned that I would like to have room made for 16 senators. There might be 12; there might be 14 in a week from now. I don't know. I am just asking that room be made for 16. That is all.

Hon. Charles McElman: Is the Honourable Senator Deschatelets speaking as head of a group?